

Some Traditional Herbal Remedies in Sunder Nagar Tehsil of District Mandi (H.P.)

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ABSTRACT: Plants have been used for medicinal purposes since prehistoric period. The healing properties of herbal medicines have been recognized in many ancient cultures. The traditional medical systems such as Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani are practiced since time immemorial and honoured by people still today. Himachal Pradesh, one of the pioneer Himalayan States is a rich repository of medicinal flora. People of the state having traditional life-style, rely to a large extent on native plant species for their healthcare management. Sunder Nagar Tehsil in Mandi District of Himachal Pradesh is the home of several traditional practices and harbours a great diversity of plants species which have been used for curing various ailments. The present investigation has been carried out for documenting the valuable information regarding medicinal plant diversity and traditional herbal practices in various villages of the Sunder Nagar Tehsil of District Mandi (H.P.)

Keywords: Herbal remedies; traditional knowledge; healthcare; medicinal plants

INTRODUCTION

Human beings have been utilizing plant resources for curing various ailments since ancient times. The importance of medicinal plants in traditional healthcare practices, providing clues to new areas of research and in biodiversity conservation is now well recognized (Uniyal et al., 2006). Traditional medicine' is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the sum total of the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness. Due to its widespread use, traditional medicines have become an integral part of our culture. Indigenous societies all over the world in different geographical regions have discovered multiple uses of natural resources around them in the form of traditional knowledge (Jain, 2004). Traditional knowledge survives usually among the indigenous and local community as they maintain a balanced ecological rhythm in their surroundings. Traditionally, local communities worldwide are extremely knowledgeable about the local plant resources on which they are so intimately and immediately dependent. Indian region is also no exception as it has also been very rich in such traditional heritage and believed to evolve through sacred Vedas (Singh & Shankar, 1996).

India is one of the 12 mega biodiversity centers; its diversity is unmatched due to the 6 different agroclimatic zones, 10 vegetative zones, and 15 biotic provinces. The country has a rich floral diversity (Samy and Gopalakrishnakone, 2007). In India, there are about 17,000 species of higher plants, of which approximately 8,000 species, are considered medicinal and used by village communities, particularly tribal

communities, or in traditional medicinal systems (Singh, 2015). For the state of Himachal Pradesh, several investigations have been carried out to explore the use of medicinal plants viz. Chamba (Gupta, 1971; Shabnam, 1964), Kangra valley (Ahluwalia, 1952; Uniyal & Chauhan, 1971), Kullu (Rastogi, 1960; Uniyal & Chauhan, 1972; Dobriyalet al., 1997), Lahul-Spiti (Rau, 1961; Uniyalet al., 1973; Chauhan, 1989; Chaurasiaet al., 2001), Una (Chauhan, 1974), Mandi (Singh, 1993, 1999, Kumar et al., 2013), and Himachal Pradesh (Sarin & Chopra, 1985; Chauhan, 1983, 1990, 1999, 2003; Singh & Aswal, 1992; Sharma & Sood, 1997; Badola, 2001). However, a systematic attempt has been required for exhaustive exploration of the herbal practices in Sunder Nagar Tehsil of Himachal Pradesh. Therefore, an attempt has been made to document the valuable traditional knowledge regarding some herbal remedies in the region.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area: Sunder Nagar is a Tehsil in Mandi District of Himachal Pradesh (India). Sunder Nagar consists of 297 Villages and 52 Panchayats. It is in the 1189 m elevation (altitude). Sunder Nagar town is used to be the capital of a princely state known as Suket and established by some Bengal rajput of Sen dynasty during 7th century. But it is the only town in Himachal Pradesh on plain valley surrounded by hills from all sides except one side towards Balh valley (Mandi). This Place is in the border of the Mandi District and Bilaspur District.

Methodology: The plants were collected from different villages of Sunder Nagar Tehsil in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. Interviews and group discussion were held with medicinemen, healers, family heads, old experienced people and many local informants for

getting a better understanding of local herbal practices. The data collected was verified and cross checked by showing plant specimens to various informants and even to the same informant on different occasions. The information pertaining to botanical name, family, vernacular name, part used, medicinal use, method of preparation, administration, and approximate dose used was recorded in the field note book. The collected plants were correctly identified with the help of various floras and illustrations. For every plant, a specimen herbarium was prepared and kept for future reference.

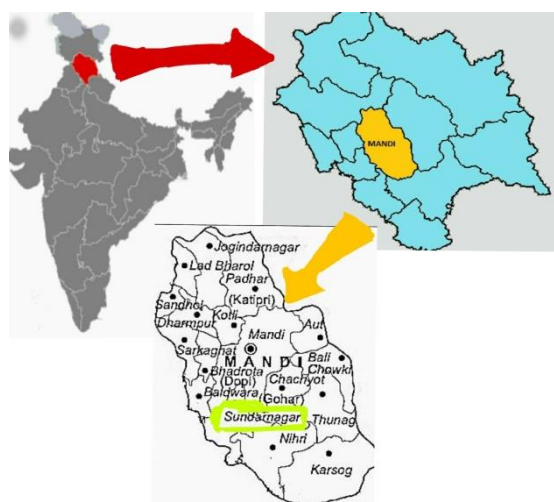


Figure 1: Map of study area

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study reveals the usefulness of 25 plant species belonging to 21 families for the treatment of various ailments in the study area (Table 1) including 6 trees, 5 shrubs, 13 herbs and 1 climbers of which 22 species belong to Dicots and 3 species to Monocots. Commonly occurring medicinally important plants are used to treat various diseases like Allergic disorders, arthritis, asthma, blood cholesterol, boils, bone fracture, cold, constipation, cough, diabetes, diarrhea, ear ache, fever, gastric disorders, hair growth, inflammation, insect bite, intestinal worms, kidney stone, memory enhancing, skin problems, sty, throat infection, toothache, urinary disorders and wounds. Different plant parts such as leaves (9 spp.), seeds (4 spp.), fruits (3 spp.), roots (3 spp.), aerial parts (2 spp.), flowers (2 spp.), stem (2 spp.), clove, latex, rhizome and stem bark (1 sp. each) were used for the preparation of traditional medicines.

Table 1: Some medicinal plants of tehsil Sunder Nagar, district Mandi (Himachal Pradesh)

| Sr. No. | Botanical Name | Vernacular Name | Family | Part/s Used | Medicinal Use(s) |
|---------|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1. | <i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L. | Puthkanda | Amaranthaceae | Roots | Powdered dried roots prescribed for Asthma. Root paste is applied to cure wounds. |
| 2. | <i>Acmellapaniculata</i> (Wall. ex DC.) R. K. Jansen | Karkara | Asteraceae | Roots | Roots are boiled in water and the decoction is used as gargle to cure throat infection. Powdered dried roots prescribed for intestinal worms. |
| 3. | <i>Ajuga bracteosa</i> Wall. ex Benth. | Neel Kanthi | Lamiaceae | Leaves | ½ teaspoon of dried powdered leaves prescribed daily for curing sty. |
| 4. | <i>Allium sativum</i> L. | Lasun | <i>Amaryllidaceae</i> | Cloves | 1-2 cloves chewed daily for curing acidity and also for lowering blood cholesterol. |
| 5. | <i>Aloe barbadensis</i> Mill. | Quariyan | Asphodelaceae | Leaves | Leaf pulp mixed with honey applied to promote hair growth. Pulp of the leaves in milk prescribed for constipation |
| 6. | <i>Artemisia absinthium</i> L. | Chhaember | Asteraceae | Aerial parts | Poultice of the aerial parts along with the leaves of Bana (<i>Vitex negundo</i>) applied to cure bone fracture and inflammation. |

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|-----|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---|
| 7. | <i>Bauhinia variegata</i> L. | Karalya | Fabaceae | Fruits | 5gm of powdered dried fruits are prescribed for diarrhoea. |
| 8. | <i>Bergeniaciliata</i> (Haw.) Sternb. | Patharchatta | Saxifragaceae | Leaves, stem | 50 ml decoction of the leaves and young stem prescribed daily on empty stomach for kidney stone. 20 gm dried powdered leaves consumed twice a day with honey to cure urinary disorders. Slightly warmed leaves are applied to cure boils. 4-5 ml leaf juice mixed with 3-4gm of powdered ajwain (<i>Trachyspermumammi</i>) and ghee given thrice a day to cure dysentery. |
| 9. | Bergerakoenigii L. | Gandelu | Rutaceae | Leaves | Leaf juice mixed with lime juice consumed twice daily to improve digestion. Powdered dried leaves mixed with mustard oil applied to promote hair growth |
| 10. | <i>Brassica rapa</i> L. | Sarson | Brassicaceae | Seeds | 2-3 drops of slightly warmed seed oil used as ear drop to cure ear ache. |
| 11. | <i>Cannabis sativa</i> L. | Bhang | Cannabaceae | Leaves | Leaf juice applied to cure insect bite. |
| 12. | <i>Centellaasiatica</i> (L.) Urb. | Brahmi, Handumalu | Apiaceae | Leaves | Decoction of leaves consumed in the morning on empty stomach for enhancing memory. Leaf oil applied on hairs for their nourishment. |
| 13. | <i>Curcuma longa</i> L. | Haldi | Zingiberaceae | Rhizome | One teaspoon of dried powdered rhizome and one teaspoon of honey mixed in cup of cow's milk consumed before going to sleep for gastric disorders. |
| 14. | <i>Ficuspalmata</i> Forssk. | Phegda | Moraceae | Latex, Fruits | Latex applied to cure wounds. Fruits are consumed to cure allergic disorders. |
| 15. | <i>Fumaria parviflora</i> Lam. | Pit Papda | Papaveraceae | Aerial Parts | Decoction of the aerial parts alongwith the bark of arjun tree (<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>) prescribed for lowering cholesterol level. |
| 16. | Justiciaadhatoda L. | Basuti | Acanthaceae | Leaves | Decoction of leaves prescribed for cough and cold. Poultice of leaves applied to cure wounds. Leaf juice is used to cure diarrhoea. |
| 17. | <i>Morus alba</i> L. | Chimu | Moraceae | Stem Bark | Powdered dried stem bark is prescribed for diabetes. |
| 18. | <i>Psidium guajava</i> L. | Amrood | Myrtaceae | Leaves | Dried powdered leaves prescribed for skin problems. Fresh leaves as an ingredient of tea given to cure diabetes. |
| 19. | <i>Ricinus communis</i> L. | Arind | Euphorbiaceae | Flowers, Seeds | Flower juice is given for cough and cold. Seed oil is applied for skin problems. |
| 20. | <i>Syzygiumcumini</i> (L.) Skeels | Jamun | Myrtaceae | Fruit, Seeds | Outer covering of the fruit is used for toothache. Powdered dried |

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|-----|--|--------------|----------------|---------|--|
| | | | | | seeds are used for diabetes. |
| 21. | <i>Thalictrum foliolosum</i> DC. | Mamini | Ranunculaceae | Roots | 3-4g of powdered dried roots given to cure fever. |
| 22. | <i>Thymus linearis</i> Benth. | JungliAjwain | Lamiaceae | Seeds | Decoction prepared by mixing 2 Teaspoons of dried seeds with 1 teaspoon of fennel, ½ teaspoon of salt and ½ teaspoon of black pepper prescribed for cold and cough. |
| 23. | <i>Tinosporacordifolia</i> (Willd.) Miers | Gulja | Menispermaceae | Stem | Decoction of stem mixed with honey prescribed for arthritis. Poultice of stem along with leaves of Bana (<i>Vitex negundo</i>) and aerial parts of Chaember (<i>Artemissia</i> spp.) applied for inflammation and wounds. |
| 24. | <i>Viola canescens</i> Wall. | Banaksha | Violaceae | Flowers | Decoction of dried flowers given along with honey for cough and cold. |
| 25. | <i>Vitex negundo</i> Linn. | Bana | Verbenaceae | Leaves | Poultice of leaves with leaves of Gandelu (<i>Bergerakoenigii</i>) and Shisham (<i>Dalbergiasissoo</i>) tied with cotton cloth on respective part to cure inflammation. |

CONCLUSIONS

Herbal remedies play a significant role in rural areas for alleviating various ailments. The uses of herbs by the local people of study area for management of various ailments are very common practices in the region. It can be concluded from the study that the local people of the region inherit a rich traditional knowledge and exploration of this knowledge has provided useful information from the area. Moreover, the indigenous knowledge and traditional practices of medicinal plants are vanishing fast. Therefore, we aimed to document indigenous uses of some important medicinal plants of Sunder Nagar Tehsil of Himachal Pradesh.

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